

Goal 2

Strengthen the environmental education profession, elevate the status of environmental education professionals and improve the quality of environmental education materials and programs.

Objective 2.1: Increase public understanding of the value of environmental education and increase support for the field of environmental education.

Action Items:

- Track national and international environmental education policies and trends and evaluate their effects on environmental education in North Carolina. Establish North Carolina as a leader in nationwide environmental education practice and policy.
- Recognize people and organizations that provide exceptional environmental education. Promote environmental education projects and programs and exemplary environmental educators to the media and to legislators.
- Foster the development of undergraduate and graduate environmental education degree programs. Use institutions of higher education that have environmental studies programs as models for other institutions that are interested in developing similar programs. Support inquiry-based, interdisciplinary instruction in environmental studies programs.
- Build a membership of the N.C. Environmental Education Advisory Council that is representative of the state's environmental education stakeholders and solicit their expertise to better promote the N.C. Office of Environmental Education and environmental education in North Carolina.
- Educate legislators about the importance of environmental education in fostering environmental ethics.
- Promote the N.C. Office of Environmental Education and the educators who complete the N.C. Environmental Education Certification Program. Invite legislators to attend environmental education events and meetings in their area.
- Provide materials and programs that explain environmental education for target audiences.
- Investigate the possibility of the Office of State Personnel creating a job family for environmental educators to strengthen the profession within the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, ensure a continued focus on environmental education in the state and support current and future development of environmental education degree programs in North Carolina.
- Build a consortium of state-level environmental education offices throughout the nation and communicate regularly with these agencies through electronic mailing lists.
- Establish environmental education staff in every regional office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to enable effective communication between environmental education providers and communities and to increase communication between educators in the department.